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ABSTRACT

Pupil control (discipline) takes on different forms in different schools, and among different teachers in the same school. Pupil control has been described as existing along a continuum from humanistic to custodial. The prototype of the custodial orientation is the school that provides a rigid and highly controlled setting concerned primarily with the maintenance of order. The humanistic orientation, on the other hand, conceives of the school as an educational community in which the students learn through cooperative interaction and experience. Research studies have found that teacher-pupil control ideology is an accurate predictor of the tone or climate of the school. Humanism in teacher-pupil control ideology has been found to be significantly related to a desirable school climate, while schools with a custodial orientation have been found to have teachers with low morale and low job and social needs satisfaction. It has also been found that the more custodial the orientation of the school, the lower the students' self-concept as learners. Besides pupil control ideology and pupil control behavior, two related school climate constructs are considered: open-closed and environmental robustness. (JD)

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PUPIL CONTROL IN THE SCHOOL CLIMATE

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PUPIL CONTROL IN THE SCHOOL CLIMATE

INTRODUCTION

The effect of schooling on students has long been of interest to educational researchers and administrators whose concerns have included both what to look at in school and how to look at it. The subject, however, is complex as the study of human behavior in school involves both values ordering and the conceptualization of mutually interacting variables.

A sizeable body of literature has dealt with such concerns using the construct of school climate as a base. This study considers four related school climate constructs: Open-Closed; Pupil Control Ideology; Pupil Control Behavior; and Environmental Robustness.

PUPIL CONTROL ORIENTATION

A large body of educational research leads to the conclusion that pupil control (discipline) is of great importance in school organizations. Nevertheless, pupil control takes on different forms in different schools, and among different teachers in the same school. The form that pupil control takes in schools has been underscored by researchers as an important social climate factor that distinguishes public schools from private schools [Coleman, et. al., 1981; Erickson, 1981; and Morton, 1976].

The conceptualization of pupil control through the research conducted by Donald Willower at Pennsylvania State University was an important step in the systematic analysis of pupil control in schools. Willower and his colleagues described pupil control as existing along a continuum from humanistic to custodial. This continuum was used to describe both contrasting types of individual ideology and the types of school structure developed around an organizational rationalization [Willower, Eidell and Hoy, 1973].

To develop a conceptual base of understanding of the continuum, prototypes of human and custodial orientations toward pupil control need to be examined.

Control Orientation Typology

The prototype of the custodial orientation is the school that provides a rigid and highly controlled setting concerned primarily with the maintenance of order. Students are often stereotyped in terms of their appearance, behavior, and parents' social status. Teachers, who hold a custodial orientation, conceive the school as an autocratic organization with a rigid pupil-teacher status hierarchy. In this model the flow of power and communication is unilaterally downward. Students must accept the decisions of their teachers without question. Teachers do not attempt to understand student behavior, but instead, view student misbehavior as a personal affront. Students are perceived as irresponsible and undisciplined persons who must be controlled through the application of punitive sanctions. Impersonality, pessimism and watchful mistrust pervade the atmosphere of the custodial school.

The prototype of the humanistic orientation conceives the school as an educational community in which the students learn through cooperative interaction and experience. Learning and behavior are viewed in psychological and sociological terms, not

moralistic terms. Self-discipline is substituted for strict teacher control. Humanistic orientation leads teachers to desire a democratic atmosphere with open channels of two-way communication between pupils and teachers and increased self-determination. In brief, a humanistic orientation is used in the socio-psychological sense suggested by Eric Fromm [1948]. This orientation stresses the importance of the individuality of each student and the creation of an atmosphere to meet the wide range of student needs.

Pupil Control Orientation: A School Climate Descriptor

Early climate research that focused on elementary and secondary schools was based primarily upon the work of Halpin and Croft [1963]. They developed a descriptive questionnaire called the Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire (OCDQ) that was designed to measure faculty perceptions of school climate. The instrument consists of 64 items organized into 8 subtests. Four sub tests (Disengagement, Hindrance, Espirit and Intimacy) measure the characteristics of the teachers as a group, while the remaining four (Aloofness, Production Emphasis, Thrust and Consideration) measure the

teachers' perceptions of the principal as a leader. Findings from this research led to the assignment of the descriptor of "open" or "closed" being assigned to the types of climates found.

More recently, the emphasis in school climate research has shifted from a management orientation to a student orientation. The conceptualization and measurement of pupil control as described by Willower and his associates [Willower, Eidell and Hoy, 1973] provided another perspective of the school climate. This perspective focused upon teacher-pupil relations rather than upon principal-teacher relations.

Lunenburg and O'Reilly [1974] found that teacher-pupil control ideology was an accurate predictor of the tone or climate of the school. Humanism in teacher-pupil control ideology was significantly related to a desirable school climate. It was found that the more custodial the orientation of the educators, the more closed the educational climate became. This is significant as it has been posited that an open environment is the preferential climate for a school.

Lunenburg tested further the utility of the custodial-humanistic typology as a predictor of school climate. His study utilized three organizational sub tests of the OCDQ (Epirit, Thrust and Disengagement) to determine the level of openness/closedness of the climate of 53 schools, identified as either humanistic or custodial in terms of their pupil control ideology. The study found that schools with custodial teacher-pupil control ideologies had significantly lower Espirit and Thrust scores and significantly higher Disengagement scores [Lunenburg, 1984].

The interpretation of the data revealed that custodial schools, as compared to humanistic schools, tend to have teachers who have low morale, reflecting low job satisfaction with respect to task achievement and social needs satisfaction; principals who are ineffective in directing the activities of teachers through personal example; and teachers who do not work well together, resulting in minimal group achievement.

The custodial-humanistic framework can be also used to generate several hypotheses about the nature of the school in several important areas. (1) Custodial schools will have more

students who have lower self-concepts than students in humanistic schools. (2) Custodial schools will have more students with lower motivation with respects to tasks that he/she faces in the classroom than students in humanistic schools. (3) Custodial schools will have more students who have negative attitudes towards their teachers than students in humanistic schools. (4) Custodial schools will have more goal displacement than humanistic schools.

Student Self-concept

Studies have indicated that the social climate of the school and the students' sense of control over their destinies are important factors in students' educational growth and development. This will consequently affect the students' self-concept as learners [Coleman, Hoffer and Kilgore, 1981].

Self-concept is a multi-dimensional concept and is thus difficult to analyze. Many studies have demonstrated that the construct of self-concept contains the element of general or global self-concept as well as a number of basic specialized self-concepts [LaBenne and Green, 1969; Davidson and Lang, 1960; Rothbart, Dalfen and Barrett, 1971]. Self-concept as a learner

or self-concept of ability as a student is a specialized aspect of the general or global self-concept [Kirch, 1963], and has been characterized by Fisher and Waetjen [1966] as one dimension of the total self-concept in the school setting.

Four distinct variants or dimensions of self concept have been identified. They are learner motivation, task orientation, problem solving and class membership [Brookover and Erickson, 1975].

Learning motivation measures the students' perception of motivation with respect to tasks faced in a classroom situation. The focus here is upon learning tasks and not procedural matters. Essentially what is measured is the learners' eagerness for the unusual or dissonant aspects within the classroom.

Task orientation describes the learners in terms of those skills and behaviors which keep the students focused upon the learning tasks. Here students would describe themselves in the areas of thinking, listening, timeliness of action and following directions. Again, the focus is upon these activities as applied to classroom learning tasks.

Problem solving gives insight into the learners' perceptions of intellectual ability. In general problem solving deals with the perception of thinking skills, differentiation capabilities, understanding and decisiveness of action.

Class membership is concerned with the students' view of being members of a group whose major reason for being is to learn. Since peers are significant others in the life of a student, the degree to which one sees oneself as belonging to the learning group of peers is, therefore, a major factor of learning.

These four aspects of students' self-concept as a learner can be measured by means of the Self-Concept as a Learner (SCAL) Scale, a fifty item Likert instrument developed by Walter Waetjen [Fisher and Waetjen, 1966]. Students are asked to respond to each item on a five-point scale ranging from five (completely true) to one (completely false).

Pupil Control Orientation and Student Self-Concept

In order to explore the relationship between the pupil control orientation of schools and student self-concept as a learner, data from 35 elementary schools were collected by

Lunenburg. The Pupil Control Ideology (PCI) was administered to fifth grade teachers and students in the 35 schools, and the Self-Concept as a Learner (SCAL) Scale was administered to students in each school. In all, nearly 3,000 students completed and returned usable PCI and SCAL forms [Lunenburg, 1983].

It was theorized that schools characterized by a humanistic pupil control orientation should foster positive student self-concept in the learning situation. Schools characterized by a custodial pupil control orientation should impact negatively on the students' self-concept as a learner. Thus it was hypothesized that the more custodial the pupil control orientation of the school, the lower the students' self concept as learners. Sub-hypotheses were generated to investigate the relationships between custodialism and the four dimensions of self-concept as a leaner: motivation, task orientation, problem solving and class membership.

Coefficients of correlation between mean "School Custodial" scores and mean student "Self-Concept as a Learner" scores were then computed to test the hypotheses of the study. In order to

control for confounding variables between teacher control ideology and the students' Self-Concept as a Learner, the school was used as the unit of analysis. Consequently the mean PCI, the degree of custodialism in pupil control orientation for each school and the mean school score for each of the variants of Self-Concept as a Learner were calculated. Total "Self-Concept as a Learner" ($R=-.31<.05$) and the Motivation Subtest of SCAL ($R=-.51<.01$) was significantly related to the pupil control orientation of the school but not to the Task Orientation, Problem Solving and Class membership sub tests of SCAL. However, when students' perceptions of the pupil control orientation of the school were compared with aspects of Self-Concept as a Learner, all sub tests of SCAL and total learner self-concept were significantly correlated with the school's pupil control orientation [Lunenburg, 1983].

The results of the study provided qualified support for the general hypothesis guiding the investigation, namely, the more custodial the pupil control orientation of the school, the lower the students' self concept as a learner. School pupil control orientation was also related to the Motivation subtest of

Self-Concept as a Learner. The more custodial the pupil control ideology of the school, the lower the students' perception of their motivation with respect to tasks they face in the classroom situation. The anticipated relationship between pupil control ideology and self-concept as a learner comes into sharper focus when student perceptions of the school's pupil control ideology are compared with variants of learner self-concept and with total self-concept as a learner. Furthermore, the multidimensional character of self-concept as a learner was supported by the findings of this study.

Pupil Control Orientation and Students' Feelings Towards Teachers

Lunenburg and Stouten [1983] explored the question of whether the teacher's pupil control orientation influence pupil feelings toward teachers in a comprehensive study involving more than 2,800 students in 131 fourth through sixth grade classrooms.

It was theorized that the important normative features of the teacher subculture of a school are devoted to the maintenance of status differences between teachers and pupils.

The custodian teacher characterized by dominance and subordination of students is a social structure found in many public schools. Given the salience of pupil control in schools, it seemed likely that teacher custodialism would have an impact upon students' projections on negativeness onto teachers. In sum, the hypothesis was that teacher custodialism in pupil control orientation would be directly related to students' projections of rejection and hostility toward teachers.

The hypothesis was supported in the overall sample of 131 teachers ($R=.60<.0001$) and in the sub samples of male ($R=.71<.001$) and female ($R=.54<.001$) teachers. In addition, a multiple stepwise regression analysis was performed in order to predict pupil feelings toward teachers from teacher-pupil control ideology as well as from a number of demographic variables such as teacher sex, grade level, teaching experience, teacher age, educational level and size of school. The results of this analysis revealed that custodialism in teacher-pupil control ideology, teacher sex, and grade level were the most significant predictors of pupil rejection and hostility, with pupil control ideology being the single best predictor [Lunenburg and Stouten, 1983].

If openness in school climate and the achievement of affective goals jut described provide valid criteria of school effectiveness, then schools with a humanistic pupil control orientation would appear to be more effective in terms of the social and emotional development of participants than those schools and teachers with a custodial orientation. Any attempt to change the atmosphere of a school in a humanistic direction is likely to be slow and painful. Nevertheless the effort should be made.

CONCEPTUALIZATION OF PUPIL CONTROL BEHAVIOR

The concepts of custodialism and humanism developed by Willower and his associates provide a way of thinking about educator orientations toward pupil control. These concepts can be employed in terms of ideology or in terms of behavior. Thus we can indicate an educator whose ideology concerning pupil control is relatively custodial or humanistic, and we can indicate an educator whose controlling behavior is relatively custodial or humanistic.

The custodial-humanistic typology has been employed to examine educator orientations concerning pupil control in schools [Lunenburg and Stouten, 1983]. Numerous studies utilizing this conceptualization and measurement of pupil control have been conducted in public schools [Willower, Eidell and Hoy, 1973]. The study of educators' pupil control ideology rather than their pupil control behavior has provided only a partial view of pupil control in the schools. Ideology may or may not be reflected in behavior. [Willower, 1977]

> While it seems reasonable to expect a correspondence between ideology and performance in a free situation, such a correspondence in the setting of a formal organization cannot be assumed. The nature of hierarchical relationships, rules, sanctions, and demands from various groups both within and outside of the organization clearly function as intervening variables [Willower, 1975].

In order to allow a more complete view of pupil control in the school, Heisel and Willower conceptualized pupil control behavior as a continuum ranging from custodialism at one extreme to humanism at the other [Willower, Eidell and Hoy, 1973]. The concept of pupil control behavior builds upon and is companion

to the extensive earlier work on pupil control ideology in schools. Specifically, it represents an attempt to define and measure pupil control behavior using the same theoretical framework that guided the earlier investigations.

Control Behavior Typology

Custodial educators strive to maintain a high degree of order among pupils. These educators are impersonal and aloof in their relationships with students and are stringent and unyielding in dealing with them. Threats and punitive sanctions are used as means of control. Custodial educators manifest suspicion and distrust of pupils, often addressing them in an unpleasant or angry manner. These educators react personally and judgementally toward students who misbehave.

Humanistic educators strive to establish a basis of mutual respect and friendship in their relationships with pupils. These educators are responsive to student suggestions and ideas and encourage pupil self-discipline and independence. They are flexible and tolerant in dealing with students and react toward misbehavior on the basis of efforts to understand it.

Pupil Control Behavior - Some Research Findings

The discrepancy between control ~~ideolo~~gy and control behavior cannot be addressed with the development of an operational definition for educator-pupil control behavior. As predicted, educators' pupil control ideology was found to be positively related to their pupil control behavior [Helsel and Willower, 1974].

Helsel found a relationship between pupil control behavior and dogmatism which he reported was mediated by pupil control ideology [Helsel and Willower, 1974]. This finding was consistent with an earlier finding by Lunenburg and O'Reilly who investigated dogmatism and its relationship to teacher pupil control ideology. They found that high dogmatic (closed minded) teachers were significantly more custodial than low dogmatic (open minded) teachers [Lunenburg and O'Reilly, 1974].

Two studies investigated the pupil control ideology/pupil control behavior interface. The first study confirmed the hypothesis that teachers' sense of power would be directly associated with the consistency of their ideology and behavior concerning pupil control [Rose and Willower, 1980]. In the second study, the prediction that teacher job satisfaction would

be directly related to the congruence of teacher pupil control ideology and behavior was supported [Heckert and Willower, 1978].

An additional study found that no relationship existed between the principal's role administration behavior and the pupil control behavior of teachers [Estadt, Willower and Caldwell, 1976].

Research findings on the question "Is there a relationship between teacher pupil control behavior and student outcomes?" have yielded inconsistent results. One study reported a direct relationship between secondary school teachers' pupil control behavior and student attitudes toward school [Pritchett and Willower, 1975]. In another study, the congruence between students' perceived and preferred for teacher pupil control behavior was directly related to students' positive attitudes toward teachers and the school [Sweeting, Willower and Helsel, 1978]. In a third investigation, the congruence of students' perception of and preference for teacher control behavior was not significantly associated with student reading achievement in sixth grade classrooms [Forlenza and Willower, 1980].

CONCEPTIONALIZATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL ROBUSTNESS

The complaint that school is boring and irrelevant is not uncommon. Works by Eddy [1967] and Moore [1967] describe the irrelevance of much of what the school offers to urban children, especially disadvantaged youth. Jackson depicts life in classrooms as places where indifference and boredom predominate, and patience, docility and obedience are rewarded [Jackson, 1968]. Contrary to the two aforementioned studies, Jackson's observations were conducted in the classrooms of the University of Chicago Laboratory School, where teachers were reputed to be unusually qualified and able. Similar research carried out in secondary schools provided similar results [Cusick, 1973].

Certain activities reduce the monotony of school. In secondary schools, athletics and co-curricular activities break the routine [Gordon, 1957]. In elementary schools, elaborate activities surround holidays like Valentine's Day, Halloween, Lincoln's Birthday, Thanksgiving and Christmas [Willower and Licata, 1975].

Willower and Licata have hypothesized environmental robustness as a construct for differentiating school environments [Willower and Licata, 1975]. They have conceptually defined environmental robustness as the perceived dramatic content of school structure [Licata and Willower, 1978].

Robustness Typology

In developing an operational definition for environmental robustness, Licata, Willower and Ellett [1978] employed ten adjective pairs: interesting-boring; challenging-dull; active-passive; unusual-usual; powerful-weak; thrilling-quieting; important-unimportant; fresh-stale; meaningful-meaningless; and action packed-uneventful. These adjective pairs are operationalized with seven point semantic differential scales developed by Osgood and his associates [Osgood, Suci and Tannenbaum, 1957].

Environmental Robustness - Research Findings

An initial inquiry using the environmental robustness construct produced significant correlations with a number of meaningful school concepts. Significant positive relationships

emerged between secondary students' perceptions of school robustness and clearly defined classroom goals, cohesiveness, and lack of academic competitiveness, diversity, and absence of feelings of alienation, and favorable interpersonal relationships between students [Licata, Willower and Ellett, 1978].

Using a sample of 84 secondary students, Licata and Willower tested the hypothesis that students who positively evaluate their school will perceive it as being more robust than students who are neutral or negative in their evaluation of the school [Willower and Licata, 1975]. As predicted, the mean robustness score for students holding a positive evaluation of their school was significantly higher than the mean robustness score for students holding a neutral or negative evaluation of the school. This finding suggests that school robustness is a desirable organizational characteristic, at least from the point of view of the student clientele [Willower and Licata, 1975].

Two studies of teacher pupil control behavior and classroom robustness demonstrated a strong inverse relationship between custodial teacher behavior and student reports of classroom

robustness. The more custodial the teacher, the less robust the class. One of the studies utilized a sample of elementary school teachers and students [Multhauf, Willower and Licata, 1978], while the other study was on the secondary school level [Estep, Willower and Licata, 1980].

Estep reported that teachers who were highly humanistic in pupil control behavior and had highly robust classrooms did not appear to have much conflict with students [Estep, 1979]. Similarly, other researchers reported that routinization and robustness appeared to be inversely related [Licata and Wildes, 1980].

In the latter investigation, two researchers selected six classrooms for study. The investigators used the field study similar to the methodology used by Wolcott [1973]. Field notes were kept which contained information gathered during interviews, the observations of the researchers, and the investigators' reactions to the data. The information was recorded in a journal and reviewed regularly in order to ascertain relationships between descriptive and conceptual interpretations of the data.

The investigators found that the low robustness classrooms in their sample tended to have teachers with more custodial pupil control ideology and behavior scores than did high robustness classes. This finding was consistent with previous findings suggesting an inverse relationship between classroom robustness and custodial pupil control ideology and behavior [Multhauf, Willower and Licata, 1978; Estep, Willower and Licata, 1980].

Another finding of the study was the inverse relationship between classroom environmental robustness and classroom routinization. Relatively high degrees of routinization were common to the low-robustness classrooms that were observed. In these classes, standardization and repetition characterized the low-robustness classrooms.

In high-robustness classes there was a reduced level of repetition and standardization of classroom organizational structure. Students enjoyed variety and spontaneity, and relied on flexible application of rules, teacher humor, free movement and interaction among students, and relatively humanistic patterns of rule administration [Merton, 1968].

IMPLICATIONS

Much has been said about the failure of today's school systems. Concerns about the low level of academic success of students and the high percent of students who do not complete school abound. Yet, in one poll after another, the major concern has been and still is the level of disciplinary problems in the schools.

Students come to the schools ill prepared for learning. Very few students identify with academic success being the reason to be in school, and thus group identification is not a major means of motivating students to succeed. In addition, this lack of identification with learning as the reason for attending school, removes self-concept as a learner as one of the major learning motivators.

It has been identified that pupil control ideology and pupil control behavior have been found to be useful concepts in the examination of the quality of school life in both elementary and secondary schools. One of the first hypotheses noted was that teacher humanism in pupil control ideology and behavior would be

directly related to students' positive reactions to the quality of school life. Utilizing pupil control ideology and behavior as a means to examine the quality of school life for students seems feasible in light of Epstein and McPartland's [1976] concepts of the quality of school life. They held that students' satisfaction with school in general, and their commitment to classwork, and the type of social interactions between the teachers and the students, were interrelated.

Studies indicated that the custodial classroom is a highly controlled setting concerned primarily with the maintenance of order. Punitive sanctions are used primarily as the means of controlling students.

If this description is considered alongside that of the students' negative reactions to the quality of school life, i.e., low satisfaction with school, low level of commitment to classwork, and poor student-teacher relations, the following elements appear to be present: (1) an autocratic form of teacher behavior is present and operating within the classroom; (2) the social and psychological needs of the students are not answered; (3) impersonality in interpersonal relationships appear to be a

hallmark that describes such classrooms; and (4) distrust and tension permeate the classroom setting.

The humanistic classroom has been described as characterized by close personal relationships and mutual respect between students and teachers, and the use of referent power to gain compliance to classroom rules. The following elements appear to be inherent in such a relationship: (1) a high level of mutual confidence and trust between student and teacher is present; (2) two-way communication is prevalent between student and teacher; (3) favorable attitudes toward the teacher, the school, and school itself is operative; (4) less anxiety, nervousness, stress, and conflict between student and teacher is present; and (5) a high degree of enthusiasm and satisfaction among all members of the organization can be observed.

The positive relationship found between teacher pupil control styles and quality of school life suggests an avenue which an administrator who desires to improve the quality of school life might explore. To the degree that teacher pupil control styles influence the quality of school life, modification of pupil control styles would also result in a change in the level of the quality of school life.

Research findings in this area tend to suggest that in every instance a custodial orientation toward pupil control was found to be associated with negative effects on classrooms and schools. These findings lead to the belief that there is a need for schools which are less custodial and more humanistic. Nevertheless, a heavy emphasis on strict pupil control in a great many schools continues to exist.

There are no simple prescriptions for changing the climates of schools. School should consider inservice programs designed to diminish the tendency of some teacher toward custodial control ideology and behavior. Teacher training institutions should include activities designed to decrease the emphasis on rigid control of pupils. Administrators and teachers need to design strategies to make the school a more attractive place for students to be.

School leaders must be concerned with the quality of school life in their organizations. They should seek for themselves the possible relationships between quality of school life and other variables in addition to pupil control styles such as: school size, pupil achievement, socioeconomic status, pupil

behavior, pupil absence and drop-out rates, teacher turnover, management-union relations, school-community relations, etc., which may impact upon the quality of school life. It is imperative that school administrators seek any and every means of improving the quality of school life for teachers and students alike.

The continued lack of robustness in the classrooms will result in an educationally impoverished environment which will not provide for increased student achievement. Robust classrooms contribute to a positive view of school, the teacher, and academic progress.

In these days of cries for school reform, emphasis has been placed upon the level of educational administration/supervision. However, studies have shown that that role administration behavior of the principal did not effect the pupil control behavior of the teachers. This raises some serious questions as to what roles must be played by educational supervisors and administrators in changing pupil control behavior and ideology in order to affect necessary climate changes.

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